

## **A Worthy Man, A Woman to be Praised**

The story turns a corner at beginning of chapter two and we are introduced to the first man since Elimelech and Naomi's two sons.

"Now Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz." Ruth 2:1

-Redeemer possibility

-We're drawn in as we hear of a man who is a potential suitor for Ruth. He is a worthy man.

A man and woman come into view in the story and we get insight into what it means to be a worthy man as well as glimpses of a woman to be praised.

So let's talk about God's wisdom as it pertains to character and what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman.

### Gender Discourse

-our culture is confused about both character and gender

-Where do we turn in times of confusion?

-we have denied self-evident truth: we are creation and we have a Creator.

-We are not self-determining, self-existent beings, but rather the creation of God, made in the image of God.

-When we deny that we have a Creator, we inevitably deny things basic to reality

[18] For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. [19] For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. [20] For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. [21] For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. [22] Claiming to be wise, they became fools, [23] and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

[24] Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, [25] because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

[26] For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; [27] and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

Romans 1:18-27

God's Word teaches us in Gen 1-2 that God created humanity male and female, in his image.

-his design is for our flourishing. Literally in his design, put a man and woman together in marriage leads to life! **challenge to submit to God's Word**

When challenged on divorce, Jesus back to Genesis 2:24- "Have you not heard..." (Mark 10:6; Matt 19:4)

God has revealed that he made humanity male and female.

-It means something to be a man and not a woman.

-we are not completely interchangeable.

-Men and women are both made in the image of God and therefore equal in worth, value, and dignity and are yet distinct! We are complementary. A dad is not a mom and a mom is not a dad and this is beautiful! A man is not a woman and a woman is not a man.

Our culture is confused (So called “same-sex marriage”, NYT gender-reveal cakes article<sup>1</sup>)

-we should stand upon God’s truth

-but we also must not take this and be militant with it.

What God has revealed about what it means to be a godly man and a godly woman will not just challenge out there but in here. It certainly does not start out there, but in these walls.

All we can do is say what we believe as Christians: that all of us are sinners, and that none of us are freaks. We must conclude that all of us are called to repentance, and part of what repentance means is to receive the gender with which God created us, even when that’s difficult. We must affirm that God loves all persons, and that the gospel is good news for repentant prodigal sons and daughters, even for those who have trouble figuring out which is which.

-Russell Moore<sup>2</sup>

He created man and woman to flourish

Let’s look at A Worthy Man and A Woman to be Praised

At the outset, I want to point out that Christian character is much an overlap between genders. Men and women will have distinctive roles, but the character of Christlikeness is for both

### **A Worthy Man**

He conducts all manners of business in a godly way (“The Lord be with you!” in v4)

-these are the times of the Judges, not everyone is a God-fearer or worshiper

A Worthy Man is revealed in how he views women

-v5 “young woman”, v8 “daughter” -Titus 2

Application: How do you view women?

-In your thoughts

-In your interest history, browser history, Netflix, and HBO queue

Do you hold brothers to this standard?

A Worthy Man is revealed in how he treats women

1) He protects women

Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you?”

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/17/dining/gender-reveal-cake.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.russellmoore.com/2013/08/12/conservative-christianity-and-the-transgender-question/>

Ruth 2:8-9

2) He provides (not to the neglect of Ruth's industriousness)

And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn.  
Ruth 2:9b

- He anticipates her needs and leads out to provide
- Do you provide for your wife's needs?
- Do you lead in your dorm room, apartment, home to provide spiritual nour. and protect.?
- ex. reading a chapter in the morning and a chapter at night (ESV Study Bible)

3) He treats women in light of how God has treated Him

The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"  
Ruth 2:12

4) He does this all at the outset, not only when he can get something in return

- single brothers, do you treat all your sisters in purity and honor, or only special treatment to certain ones?
- married brothers, do you still show your wife the kind of cherishing and love Scripture commands of you now that you're married?

In Boaz, we have a great example of a worthy man. A man who protects the vulnerable, provides for a woman in need

### **A Woman to be Praised<sup>3</sup>**

1. She is industrious

- She sets out to go to a field to glean
- She came early in the morning, got the go ahead, and then worked until evening
- She works hard and then goes brings Naomi food

2. She shows great initiative

- This is stereotype-breaking in some ways.
- She's the one who initiated the *hesed* love to Naomi
- She goes out to the field
- She waits and asks permission to work the field
- She went willing to work.

She is exhibiting some of the beautiful traits we see in Proverbs 31.

3. She is humble

- She has a right view of herself in relation to others and God
- She has a spirit that will not grasp for something that is not hers
- She is astounded that she's treated kindly. (how often are we the opposite?)
- She is willing to receive something from someone else

..."Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" Ruth 2:10b

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<sup>3</sup> I got these traits from Piper's *A Sweet Providence*

Her humility reminds us of another woman who encountered Jesus, another outsider  
She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.  
Matthew 15:27-28

It is this kind of humility that is the seedbed of all great Christian character

### **Humility is the Seedbed**

Martin Luther, on his deathbed, is said to have scribbled on a piece of paper, "We are beggars; this is true." -Martin Luther

The quote has been extended and attributed to him nowadays as "Christianity is one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." Martin Luther

This is true Christianity and the Bible is all the way shot through with humility as the seedbed, the soil for every other good characteristic we might develop.

All we can ascertain from the text is that Ruth "heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food." Ruth 1:6b

She heard from Naomi there was bread and she boldly committed herself to God's people and went to see if God might show kindness to her.

Boaz has seen her great faith and as a wealthy person in a place of privilege and power doesn't say, let me look at my checkbook and see what I can do for you today. He says "The LORD bless you and repay you." He sees all his resources as gifts from God.

-He is not a self-made man. There is no such thing as a self-made man.

-He is a humble servant of God.

Would you desire to be a man or woman of God?

-Don't aim at all the ways you're going to be better

-Humble yourself before God

But this is the one to whom I will look:  
he who is humble and contrite in spirit  
and trembles at my word.

Isaiah 66:2b

Jesus says the way INTO the kingdom is being poor in spirit.

"God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble." James 4:6

Transition: Now how to do we truly become humble? These are all mere platitudes until we see with the eyes of our heart. We need to look at the Everest of humility.

### **The Character of Christ**

Hearing God opposes the proud, but give grace to the humble can at times be like hearing the Grand Canyon is big. New Zealand is pretty this time of year. True statement, but actually violence to the truth.

The Grand Canyon makes me feel astonishingly small. New Zealand overloads your heart with beauty as you take in waterfall after waterfall, fjords shooting up out of the water, rolling hills everywhere.

If you want to know humility, look at the Everest of humility in Christ.

What Ruth is the beginning sparks of, Christ is the blazing light of

Ruth gave up a chance to find another husband in a familiar area

Christ gave up his heavenly throne to win back the heart of an adulteress

Ruth pledged to go wherever Naomi would go; that Naomi's God would be her God; even to die with her

Christ came down into our darkness; promised to make His God our God; and he died not with us, but FOR us

Ruth upon being shown kindness by Boaz said she didn't deserve this kind of favor

Christ, the perfect Son of God renounced all right he had to favor and said give me what they deserve

who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:6-11

Would you be a man or woman of God? Humble yourself

What will humility look like?

1. A willingness to admit you need help. (Going for prayer, confessing your sin, worshipping God...some of us just sit there, arms crossed. God's feelings aren't hurt. You look foolish)
2. A willingness to submit to all of what God's Word said. The things spoken today aren't popular. Humility, God's design for sex and gender, the necessity of repentance. Study over God's Word, don't blindly accept it, but when you do, humble your own mind to the mind of God.
3. Humility will look like men humbly sacrificially leading to serve, protect, and provide for women. It will look like women humbly working hard with initiative, and receiving. All of us, together for the Gospel ?
4. Humility will look like contentment and gratitude and joy.

How are you doing? Better than I deserve.